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# THE SOUTHERN PLANTER;

Devoted to Agriculture, Horticulture, and the Household Arts.

Agriculture is the nursing mother of the Arts.

*Xenophon.*

Tillage and Pasturage are the two breasts of the State.  
*Sully.*

C. T. BOTTS, Editor.

Opposite Merchants' Coffee House, Main Street.

VOL. II.

RICHMOND, FEBRUARY, 1842.

No. 2.

For the Southern Planter.

## AN ESSAY ON THE BEST METHOD OF CULTIVATING ROOTS.

In treating on this subject, I propose to consider it in the following manner:

1st. The special and peculiar value of this article as a food for stock;

2d. The best mode of its cultivation; and,

3d. The peculiar roots that seem best adapted to our climate and soil.

On the first point I would remark, that after carefully considering the subject, I do not consider roots as specially valuable, on account of the *nutriment*, which they contain. Indeed I think it more than probable, that an acre of strong land, such as we commonly give to roots, would, if planted in corn, generally produce as much nutritive matter, and perhaps more, and that, too, with less than one-half of the cultivation. If the corn be sowed broad-cast, and mowed down when in the tassel, and then treated as hay, there is no doubt, that the fodder would yield twice as much nutritive matter, especially for cattle, as the same land would furnish when cultivated in roots; and this too with an amount of labor bearing very little proportion to the root culture. Nor ought it to be forgotten, that two such crops may be easily obtained from the same land, during the same season. The ordinary product of corn, on good land, when cultivated in the ordinary way, is about fifty bushels to the acre. This, together with the blades, the tops, the shucks, the stalks and the cobs, may be considered as fully equal in nutriment to five hundred bushels of roots. This being the case, and the corn crop more certain, and requiring, at the same time, much less labor in its cultivation, seems at once to determine the thing in favor of corn. Wherein then consists, it will be naturally inquired, the great value of the root crop? To this, I reply, that in feeding, our sole object is not to supply an amount of nutriment barely sufficient to sustain the animal; but to fill his stomach, and thus to satisfy him, and keep him quiet. Besides, it is a point conceded on all hands, as I have reason to believe, that a *variety* of food, is not only highly beneficial, but absolutely necessary to the thrift of any creature. Some time ago, this matter was fairly tested in Paris, by a series of experiments, entered into on this very subject. The animal experimented

on was the dog. A number of these creatures were put in separate confinement, and all fed on the most nutritious food, but each restricted to one individual kind. Some were fed with bread, some with meat, and others, again, with sugar, but the result in all cases, was ultimately the same—they all sickened, pined away and died.

Now, every breeder must have observed the great value of green food, in the sustenance of his stock. There is no food which they appear to eat with the same avidity—nor is there any food, which keeps them in better health and thrift. Every farmer must also have observed, that his cattle and other animals, kept a long time on dry food, appear to become tired of it, and even to loathe it; and that at the approach of spring, they become weak and delicate, and this too in the midst of plenty. Now here is a case, in which the great value of succulent food clearly displays itself. In winter and early spring we cannot get green food. For the lack of this, or some substitute for it, our cattle of every description decline—our oxen become too poor to perform their labor—our cows yield a poor, blue milk, and that too in very small quantities, and the butter, if any butter is made, is scarcely eatable. But in winter we can get roots, and these, especially when boiled and mixed with a small quantity of meal and salt, will furnish a rich and most valuable food. Indeed, roots, by their juicy qualities, appear to go a great way towards supplying the deficiency of green food, at that season of the year when it is so desirable.

Another great and even paramount benefit of the root crops, is manifested in that all-important branch of good husbandry—the making of large quantities of rich manures. This crop, it is said, has given a new impulse to the whole system of English husbandry. There the root is cultivated, not in patches, but in large fields, and by this great multiplication of food, the English farmer is enabled greatly to increase the number of his stock. And the thing seems to go on in a kind of geometrical ratio, for the more food he has, the more cattle he can keep; and the more cattle he has, the more manure he can make. Instead, therefore, of manuring his lands by small patches, which was formerly the case, he now manures them by whole fields, and his products, are proportionably increased. Every farmer in this country must also have observed, how luxuriant his crops are on his turnip patch, compared



with the adjoining lands; and this, too, for a number of years in succession. Now, what can be the reason of this? It is not simply that turnips *grow there*. It is because of the special care which was taken first in the manuring, and then in the culture of that spot. Now suppose, that instead of a small piece, we extend our efforts, and by means of enlarged exertions, bring a larger piece into profitable cultivation: every one must see, that in this way whole fields, one after another, will ultimately be enriched. And I do contend, that upon trial, the root will be found a most important auxiliary in bringing about this great desideratum. Besides, cattle when restricted for a long time to dry food, not only loathe it, but it seems to have a very bad effect upon their bowels. Their excrement is voided in dry lumps, and in very small quantities; and their whole appearance plainly indicates that their health is materially suffering. Now, the best antidote to this, or the best remedy, when it has occurred, is frequent and generous supplies of rich food, of which some one of the roots forms a principal part. If, therefore, by root culture, our lands are actually improved—if, by feeding on roots, our stock is kept in good thrift, and especially, if by the same, we can make a much larger amount of manure, and of a quality greatly improved, then the question is at once settled, that this is a most valuable crop.

The next thing to be considered, is the best mode of cultivating it. And here I would observe, that the rich, deep, *loamy* soil, is evidently the best for this crop. An excess of clay or sand is found, upon trial, an unfavorable position; but that peculiar mixture of the two which forms what is commonly called a *loam*, is decidedly the best. Having then selected a suitable situation, if not already rich, it must be made so: for it is mere folly to attempt to raise the root on poor land. The quantity of manure to be applied, will depend on the condition of the land. If very poor, it will require fifty or sixty cart loads to the acre—if in good heart, half that quantity will be sufficient. Special attention ought also to be paid to the *quality* of manure. Coarse materials, such as we usually get from the farm-pen, will not answer the purpose. Our finest and richest manures, such as we get from our stables, ought to be selected for this crop, and if they have lain and fermented awhile, so as to separate into small pieces when spread, it will be all the better. Roots, when grown among lumps of manure, are found to be crooked and branchy, whereas, if they are sustained by fine manures, they are straight and free from prongy branches.

The ground being enriched, the next thing is to prepare it for sowing. This is to be done by repeated ploughings and harrowings, until the whole is reduced to the finest tilth. Every clod and turf ought to be completely reduced, and

the whole surface made as fine and light as possible. In this process, especially where beets, carrots, and parsnips are to be grown, it will be of great service to use the coulter, running the scores as deep as possible. This will break and loosen the sub-soil, and thus give a deeper tilth to your plantation. The ground being thus prepared, I greatly prefer, especially for spring roots, to throw the whole into beds, such as we use for planting corn. The object of this is to drain off the superfluous water, which at this season of the year is often injurious. These beds, I would make at distances of six feet, and on each bed put two rows of roots. The rows will then be three feet apart, and this distance I prefer, not because the roots will not grow nearer together, but because of the greater convenience of after-cultivation. This, I am aware, is generally classed among the hoe-crops, but with the exception of the thinning and first-weeding, it need not necessarily be so, for in rows of the above distance, the plough and cultivator, may be made to complete the whole process, and this at a great saving of time and labor. Turnips may be cultivated, pretty much as the other roots, except that for them, the season being farther advanced, I would not throw the land into beds, but leave the surface as smooth and level as possible. Beets, carrots, parsnips and potatoes, ought all to be planted as early in spring as the ground will thoroughly pulverise—turnips from the 20th July till the 10th of August. In sowing, many persons use a drill, but I find that an experienced hand will take the seeds between his thumb and fingers and deposit them with great accuracy and rapidity. Indeed, I had rather depend on a careful operator, than on the best drill I have ever seen. As soon as the seeds are sown, they ought to be covered slightly with fine earth. The hand-rake is a very suitable instrument for this operation. And then it is a matter of great importance to pass a heavy roller over the whole. It is very desirable that the ground should be in a moist state at the time of sowing, but if it has been prepared with the care stated above, I would not hesitate to sow even in a dry time. I recollect once seeing a turnip-patch, over a small part of which, the roller had accidentally passed—there the turnips had come up very thick, whereas on every other part they were too thin for half a crop. If a roller cannot be commanded, the deficiency may be pretty well supplied by walking over all the scores, taking care to make the steps very short. The great object is to bring the seeds in firm contact with the ground, which can only be done by pressure of some kind; otherwise, spaces will be left about the seeds, which will prevent their vegetating. In sowing, especially the turnip, the chief danger to be apprehended, is the unnecessary and profuse use of seed. A very successful cultivator of this root once observed to me, that his practice is

sowing was to take out as many seeds as he thought would be sufficient for his patch; but in going along, he was careful to stump his toe, and spill at least one-half—the balance, he found amply abundant. The fact is, the man prepared his land with great care, and this will at once, account for his great success in the vegetation of his seed. I have often seen it stated, that one pound of seed is sufficient for an acre; but as it is easier to remove supernumeraries, than to supply deficiencies, I would prefer half as much again.

The turnip crop, especially in its young state, has a most formidable enemy in what is commonly called the turnip-fly or beetle, a small insect somewhat larger than the flea, but resembling that pest in this, that it skips away at the approach of danger. So troublesome is this insect in England, where the turnip is cultivated to a very great extent, that the government of that country has offered a very large reward, £20,000, I believe, for an effectual antidote to its depredations. Essay after essay, amounting in the whole, to many volumes, has been written on this subject, but still their crops are often totally destroyed. I have often thought, that were I in that country, I should pocket the cash. I have at least discovered a remedy which, after more than ten years' trial, I have found effectual, and that is by strewing a small quantity of fine tobacco over the plants whilst in their tender state. But it is to be remarked, that if the strength of the tobacco be destroyed by a shower of rain, the process must be repeated, until the plants are out of danger. The after-culture consists in thinning the plants, when sufficiently large, to intervals of about ten inches or a foot, and then in keeping them perfectly free from weeds and grass throughout the season. Turnips commonly vegetate very quickly after sowing, so that the seeds require no soaking or other preparation; but beets, carrots and parsnips being enveloped in a hard crust, require a long time to vegetate. I would, therefore, recommend that previous to sowing, the latter be soaked some three or four days in warm water. Indeed, I object not, if they be not only greatly swollen, but many of them actually sprouted. When committed to the ground in this state, they come up quickly, so as to get the start of weeds, their great enemy.

And here I cannot impress it too strongly upon every cultivator of the root, to be very careful as to the quality of his seeds. If this article be defective in any respect, the crop will be proportionably curtailed. I have satisfied myself, from long experience, that *bought* seed cannot be invariably relied on. In some instances, though sowed with every necessary precaution, they have entirely failed—in others, the vegetation has been very partial, and the few plants which made their appearance, were

weak and sickly. This being the case, I would strongly recommend, that every man should raise his own seed. I have never been disappointed in the home-bred article. In raising seed, I have seen it recommended, and experience has proved to me, that the plan is an excellent one, to remove all the lateral branches, leaving none but the strong middle stem to bear the seed. These seeds are larger and heavier, and it is but reasonable to suppose, that they will impress their own product with their character.

We will now consider the crop as come to maturity, and if throughout the whole process, you have used sufficient care and industry, and especially, if a kind Providence has given you a good season, the crop will be an abundant one. Of beets, the product will be about eight hundred bushels to the acre, and of turnips, carrots and parsnips, about five hundred bushels. Indeed, we constantly have accounts of more than double this quantity; but my calculation is founded upon the hot, dry climate in which we live.

The foregoing is from the pen of a distinguished agriculturalist, who is known to us by *reputation*, at least. We are sorry that particular circumstances induce him to withhold from his communication the authority which his name would carry with it, but, as beggars cannot be choosers, we must be thankful for whatever we get.

The first point is to establish the relative value of the root crop, a question, that we have considered hitherto not exactly settled. Our author, whilst he admits the greater product of the corn crop, rests his argument in favor of roots upon the superior cultivation induced, and their peculiar fitness in supplying the want of green food, at a season when it cannot be had. Now we humbly apprehend that corn might, nay ought, to be cultivated as highly as the root crop itself; the same degree of pulverizing and manuring, that is necessary to the one crop, is equally advantageous to the other; and we cannot see how the man, who neglects his field when planted in *corn*, can be expected to attend to it, because it is planted in *roots*.

As to the value of green food, we have been inclined to think that nature generally provided it at the season when she required it. At any rate, we have considered that sound, old, corn was a pretty good substitute for it.

If the root crop can be introduced advantageously amongst us, and we only desire, by the doubts we have expressed, to induce inquiry,



then is this communication, which will be continued in our next, invaluable to the southern farmer.

#### FOOD FOR HORSES.

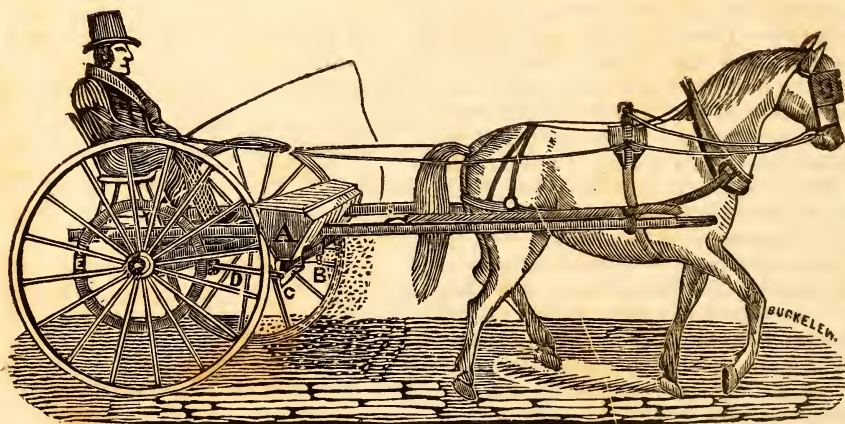
The following is a clear and condensed statement of facts, exactly fitted for the columns of the Planter. It comes from the county of Albemarle, and the plan, we understand, finds great favor with some of the best farmers.

*Mr. Botts*.—We feed horses on corn cut the last of August and 1st September, stacked, at first, half a barrel in each stack or shock, after-

wards more; the last of October and 1st November it is housed; that for the horses, shuck and all; from twelve to fifteen ears per horse are placed in a hogshead filled with water, one quart of salt and one pint of lime being added for ten horses; the hogshead is divided with plank, so as to enable us with less trouble to come at the corn which has been in a sufficient length of time, (twenty-four hours). Thus morning and night a side of the hogshead is filled. We find from twelve to fifteen ears sufficient in winter to keep a horse fat; ours work constantly and hard. This plan also saves near half the hay usually wasted. We use no rack, having instead, double troughs, which makes it necessary to cut the hay.

COLLONUS.

#### HATCHES SOWING MACHINE.



**EXPLANATION.**—This machine consists of a pair of wheels of the size of ordinary carriage wheels: an axletree ten feet long, with a pair of shafts for the horse to draw by. Just in front of the wheels, and across the shafts, is the hopper A, ten feet long and capable of holding three or four bushels of grain. At the bottom of the hopper is a slide or agitator one inch square, faced with iron and having teeth on the inside, by the motion of which the grain is shaken out. The width of the crevice, and the consequent discharge of the seed, can be increased or diminished by means of set screws, as shown at B. When the machine is in operation a rapid vibratory motion is given to the agitator by means of a small rod and crank C, attached to one end of a small shaft fifteen inches long, on the other end of which is a pinion wheel D, with cogs or teeth meshing into the master wheel E. The master wheel is bolted on to the inside

of the spokes of the high wheel of the machine. It is two feet in diameter, and one revolution of it gives eight revolutions to the pinion wheel and shaft. On the top of the back part of the machine is a seat for the driver. A small cord is attached to the end of the pinion shaft, and reaches to the seat of the driver, by means of which he can readily put the machine out of gear, so as to stop the discharge of seed at any time when desired. The machine will sow all kinds of grain, grass seed and plaster, at any desired rate from four quarts to as many bushels per acre. It is easily managed, and not liable to get out of order. A man or a smart boy with a horse, can sow from twenty to twenty-five acres with it in a day. The inventor and proprietor of this machine has spent several years in testing and improving it, and he now introduces it to the public with the utmost assurance that it will fully meet the wants and expecta-



tions of the community. It is well known that sowing is one of the most difficult and laborious operations of the farmer, and one which but few men can perform properly. Hence arises the need of a machine like this—one that will perform the work correctly, expeditiously, and with ease. All who have used this machine, agree in declaring that it answers the purpose exactly; and if we are not mistaken, it will in a few years be as uncommon to see a farmer sowing grain by hand in this country, as it now is to see one thrashing with a flail.

The cut and description are both taken from the American Mechanic, and contain all that we know upon the subject.

For the Southern Planter.

*Mr. Editor*,—It may be safely asserted that two of the most prominent causes of the present impoverished state of our lands may be found, first, in our want of care in availing ourselves of every means of improvement in our power, and, secondly, our want of judgment in their application. The object of this article is, first, to point out a source of improvement, (which with us at least has hitherto been neglected,) and, secondly, to point out an error which is often committed, even by those, who are considered good farmers, in the application of their compost. The source of improvement, sir, to which I allude, is rich earth, such as we find around old houses, the corners of fences, which have stood for many years, &c. I had often heard of the improvement effected by this kind of earth, and was induced, in 1839, to apply it to some poor land, which I wished to cultivate in corn, and the result was altogether satisfactory; for by its aid, land, which would scarcely have brought five bushels of corn, produced five barrels, to the acre, although the first planting was almost entirely destroyed by the cut-worm, and it was not replanted until the 16th of May. Not having used this earth before, (and not having that confidence in it which I now have) I was induced to apply it in too large quantities, as I put one hundred loads to the acre. This was spread, and the land then ploughed, whereas, had I first ploughed the land and then applied the earth, I believe that the same benefit would have been derived from the application of half of that quantity.

The wheat upon this land was so injured by the various diseases, which affected that crop in 1840, that, although there was a great increase of straw, there was no great yield of wheat. But there is now a fine crop of clover on this land, which promises great improvement. To some, this method of improving may appear to be too laborious, and indeed would be, had we to haul it as far as we have to haul our compost;

but this is not the case, for this earth is often within a few yards of land, which requires it, and to improve it by this earth, is, in fact, easier, than to improve it by compost. By availing myself of this source of improvement, I was enabled, in one year, to get out upon my land two hundred loads to the hand, of improving matter, whereas, had I relied upon my stables and farm-pen, I would not have had more than fifty loads to the hand. The second thing to which I wish to call attention, is the error committed by many farmers in the application of their compost. With many, it is the custom to haul out their compost early in the spring, upon the land, which they intend to fallow, where it is deposited in piles of a single load each, there to remain until the land is fallowed, which is generally done about August. This method of applying manure, though it may appear absurd to you, *Mr. Editor*, is quite common with many farmers with us. My eyes were opened to the folly of this course, when quite a boy. The compost had been, as usual, hauled out in the spring, and suffered to remain in heaps until August, when we commenced to fallow. My father, (thinking that his want of success in the improvement of his land by compost had been the result of inattention in spreading it,) requested me to attend to it, which I did, and had it carefully scattered; but still there was no improvement, save where the piles of manure had been deposited. The fact was, that the strength of the manure had either been evaporated, or washed into the earth by rains. I will here add my method of using compost. In the fall, and early in the spring, I have those parts of my corn field ploughed which I do not intend manuring; whilst such parts as are too poor to cultivate in corn without, are left till the last. Upon this land then, I have compost hauled, spread, and immediately ploughed in before planting corn. If, however, this land cannot be manured in time for the planting of the main crop of corn, it is done immediately after, and planted in corn. The advantage of this method is, that a good crop of corn is secured, and the land is still in a fine condition for wheat. Should my corn land not require all of my compost, or should we, by the lateness of the season, be compelled to desist from hauling it out on the corn land, I prefer carrying it out as soon as practicable, and spreading it on the land which is intended for a fallow for wheat. This system, which is gaining ground with us, I think, the best that can be followed; for by the aid of the manure, there is a good crop of clover produced, and the land is rendered capable of producing a good crop of wheat. Upon land, which was manured in this way last spring, I have now a fine crop of wheat, although when it was thus manured it was too poor to produce a decent crop.

A FRIEND TO IMPROVEMENT,



## BUTTER.

The following is an extract from a letter to the Editor of the Boston Cultivator. It is very certain, that the temperature is an important item in butter making. Artificial means must be used to lower it in summer, or raise it in winter, until it reaches the temperate point, if you would avoid an indifferent article, obtained with great labor.

"To make good winter butter, let the following rules be observed. Never let your milk be exposed to a cold frosty air when the cream is rising; and when the cream is taken from the milk, let it be kept in a room or closet, constructed of bricks if possible, where it can be kept warm by a stove, so that it shall not be chilled in the coldest of weather, and the cream be well stirred on every addition being made to that in the pot. The best butter is commonly made in May or June, and, of course, the cream ought to be kept in a temperature of warmth corresponding to those months. A situation nigh a cooking-stove we have found most convenient for curing the cream. We have also found a great advantage in heating the milk, when first strained, nearly or quite to a scalding heat. Such cream will not froth in the churn.

S. BROWN."

*Wilmington, Nov. 3, 1841.*

From a prize essay on making compost heaps and the value of liquid manures, written by Mr. James Dixon, and published in the Journal of the English Agricultural Society, we make the following extracts:

"Having brought great quantities of both peat and sawdust into my farm yard, I laid out for the bottom of a compost heap a space of considerable dimensions, and about three feet in depth: three-fourths of this bottom was peat, the rest sawdust: on this we conveyed daily the dung from the cattle-shed, the urine also is conducted through channels to wells for its reception—one of each side of the compost heap;—common water is entirely prevented from mixing with it. Every second day the urine so collected is thrown over the whole mass with a scoop, and at the same time we regulate the accumulated dung. This being continued for a week, another layer, nine inches or a foot thick, of peat and sawdust (and frequently peat without sawdust) is wheeled on the accumulated heap. These matters are continuously added to each other during winter, and in addition, once in every week never less than 25 cwt.—more frequently 50 cwt. of night soil and urine; the latter are always laid next above the peat or bog earth, as we think it accelerates their de-

composition. It is perhaps proper here to state that the peat is dug and exposed to the alternations of the weather for several months before it is brought to the heap for admixture; by this it loses much of its moisture. In some cases, peat contains acid or astringent matters, which are injurious to useful vegetation. On this I have not tried any decided experiment, but am led to the supposition by frequently seeing stones, some in a partial state of decomposition, others wholly decomposed in bogs, and at the depth of several feet from the surface. Some years' experience has convinced me of the impropriety of using recently dug peat; proceeding in the manner I recommend, it is superior and more convenient on every account—very much lighter to cart to the farm-yard or any other situation where it is wanted; and so convinced am I of its utility in composts for every description of soil, except that of its own character, that wherever it can be laid down on a farm at less than four shillings per ton, I should recommend every agriculturist and horticulturist that can command it, even at the cost here stated, to give it a fair trial. So retentive and attractive of moisture is peat, that if liberally applied to arid, sandy soil, that soil does not burn in a dry season, and it so much improves the texture and increases the produce of an obdurate clay soil, if in other respects rightly cultivated, that actual experience alone can fairly determine its value.

"For the conveyance of night-soil and urine, we have the largest and strongest casks, such as oils are imported in; the top of which is provided with a funnel to put the matters through, and the casks are fixed on wheels like those of a common dung-cart. For the convenience of emptying this carriage, the compost heaps are always lower at one end; the highest is where we discharge the contents, in order that they may in some degree spread themselves over the whole accumulation. The situation on which the wheels of these carriages stand while being discharged is raised considerably; this we find convenient, as the compost heap may be sloped six or seven feet high: low compost heaps, in my opinion, should be avoided. The plan here recommended I have carried on for some time. I find no difficulty in manuring my farm over once in two years; by this repetition I keep up the fertility of my land, and it never requires more than a moderate application of manure.

"The beneficial effects of top-dressing young clovers or mixed grass seeds is scarcely ever regarded with due attention. By this help crops are not only much increased, even thirty or fifty per cent. but they are also ready for cutting much sooner, which in a backward spring gives the stock farmer inestimable advantages for sorting his cattle, and thereby raising manure at his pleasure. The full effects of this practice I first experienced in the dry season of 1826: I



had some clovers which had been manured the previous winter; my land was soon covered with crop, and that so vigorous a one, that the hot weather did not overpower it. My cows that summer were tied up during the day-time, and in the night they were turned out into the pastures; most of the stock in my district were much distressed from over-heat as well as from being short of food for some weeks; milk yielded little butter; scarcely any for a time was offered in our large market town:—no doubt that year will be remembered by many gentlemen on the Agricultural Society's committee. I, however, was under no difficulties on account of the season; my clovers produced plenty of food for my cattle, and in return, they yielded as much milk and butter as I ever recollect from the same number. I am persuaded that the same satisfactory results would have followed if the same system had been adopted for feeding stock; it was that year my attention was first directed to raising compost heaps from urine. This I now do frequently without the help of any dung from the cattle-stalls. The same occasion called my mind to another matter well worthy every farmer's attention—I allude to the great superiority of the manure raised in summer-stalling to that produced in the stalls during winter. I verily believe the difference is fifty per cent. unless stock are fed in a great measure during winter with artificial food. In an arrangement for making compost heaps from urine, I would recommend a receptacle to be made at the back of the cattle-stalls just outside the building; this should hold about twenty cart-loads of mould, or any other matters to be employed; if its situation were a little lower than the cattle-sheds, all the urine would pass into it, and remain there until the mass is completely saturated, which will be sufficient; when the earthy matters are covered over with it, the compost may then be thrown out and the proceeding again renewed. In order to show part of the benefits of this practice, I beg here to observe that the most foul or weedy mould may be used; the action of the urine, if not reduced by water, is so powerful, that wire-worms, the black slug, many other destroying insects, and all vegetables, weeds, &c. when in contact with the urine for a time are deprived of their living functions. The situation for raising this compost should be protected from the weather by a covering similar to a cart-shed; indeed, the deteriorating influences of rain, sun, and arid winds, on all putrescent matters or compost are so serious, that in my humble judgment it would be worth while to have places under cover where these are usually laid down."

#### GRAIN-RAKE.

An implement under this name, patented by Mr. Israel Kyes, of Putney, Vermont, is highly

spoken of as a labor-saving machine, and is thus described:

"It has two wheels, two feet in diameter attached to an axle long enough to pass each wheel clear of the cradled grain, say five feet. To the axle is affixed six teeth like cradle-fingers attached in line, and two handles in the opposite direction fasten in the manner of sythe-nibs that may be altered to give the right pitch to the fingers. You have a machine to take up grain from the cradle swathe much faster and easier than taking up by the hand-rake. It passes before the laborer like the wheel-barrow. When a bundle is gathered on the fingers, you step your foot on a wire attached to the handle which raises the fingers and brings the bundle up ready to be bound."

#### PAPER NETS FOR SILKWORMS.

We know very little about the culture of silk, but are inclined to think, that, as soon as the disgust created by the morus fever shall have worn off, and the next generation come to consider the subject calmly and coolly, it will be found to be a very good business, under certain circumstances. To those who have engaged in the raising of worms, we are assured, that the following extract, from a letter to the Editors of the National Intelligencer, will be worth perusal. The author, after speaking of a somewhat similar net used in France, adds,

"I will now furnish directions for making and using nets similar to mine, which I have found to accomplish well what is ascribed to the French nets.

"These nets are made by providing a framework of light laths, three feet long and two feet wide, (this being the size most convenient,)—the two pieces of laths three feet long being united by three pieces two feet long, one at each end and one in the middle. The holes (five-eighths of an inch in diameter) are punched in sheets of strong brown paper, three feet long and two feet wide, to suit the frames on which they are pasted. The space between the holes may be about an inch. With an instrument called a wad-cutter, twenty sheets of paper may be punched at once. Double sets of these nets will cost but little more than shelves of rough plank, and if the frames are well put together with wrought nails, they will last more than twenty years. This paper will require renewing in every period of six or seven years. After the silkworms have accomplished the *third* moulting, the nets may be laid over the worms daily, if the culturist desires it, up to the time of mounting, and the worms will be kept as clean as the most careful could desire, and with comparatively little labor.

"The nets must not be laid over the worms when they are torpid; but after the third and *fourth* moultings, when nearly all the worms are aroused, they may be laid over them daily; and when the leaves are scattered over the paper, they will speedily extricate themselves from the litter, ascend through the holes and commence eating. The nets may be used with or without shelves under them; if without shelves, they can be supported by parallel slips of timber, about twenty inches apart; if placed on shelves, they must be raised about two inches by placing blocks of timber under each end. When these nets are used, disease cannot be produced by the accumulation of litter without gross negligence, yet no claim to *infallibility* is set up for them. Let silk culturists try them. They will be found simple, (a child can apply and use them,) *economical*, and very efficient.

LAYTON Y. ATKINS."

Stafford County, Va. Sept. 1841.

In a very scientific and able disquisition, upon the subject of "Feeding," delivered before the Agricultural Society of Tennessee, Mr. Shelby enters into a physiological explanation of the fact, that half-fed animals always exhibit disproportionately large stomachs and heads. They are the two first parts provided for at the expense of the absorbents, by which the general system is nourished. He plausibly maintains, that, when this is the case in early life, the absorbent vessels become inert and powerless, for want of exercise, and that an animal, thus arriving at maturity, can never regain its lost powers—consequently, he asserts, that that prodigious increase of weight obtained by Dr. Martin and others, 3 lbs a day, is totally impracticable in such a case. A hog taken up and fed freely, after having run at large, scantily provided for from his birth, will, he avers, become sick and feverish; the absorbents having become rigid and non-elastic, he will be unable to digest this unusual quantity of food, his excrement will be more copious and richer; and a post mortem examination of the lungs and liver will exhibit evident marks of disease. In no case, he declares, will it be possible to fasten on such a subject an increase of 240 lbs. in six months; a result obtained by Dr. Martin and others with younger animals.

Now there is reason in every thing, and if the absorbents become inert for want of exercise, they may be overstrained by unnatural excess. Whilst we are not sufficiently versed in physiology to determine from which extreme

most danger is to be apprehended, we do not hesitate to express the opinion, that the unnatural, surfeiting system, by which an animal is made to gain 3 lbs. a day, is neither profitable to the feeder, nor agreeable to the animal. Nor do we believe that animals in this part of the world, at least, often fail to get enough to keep their "absorbents" in exercise: at any rate, if a running-out hog, when he is taken up and fattened, becomes diseased; all we have to say is, that sick hog-meat makes pretty good eating.

#### SOILING.

Much has been said both for and against the soiling system. Like all other theories, it has had its opponents and advocates, who run into extremes, and like all other extreme partisans, they have been both in the wrong. Under certain circumstances, we have no doubt the system may be pursued to infinite advantage, and we believe it is generally better adapted to the plan of northern, than southern farming. To the north the whole farm is highly cultivated, and they have little or no pasture land, that they could not reap. Fencing, too, is much more of an object with them than with us.

Still, as there are many here to whose circumstances the system would apply, partially at least, we present the following statement of its advantages:

#### JOSIAH QUINCY'S FARM.

Josiah Quincy, President of Harvard College, has one of the finest farms in the vicinity of Boston. It is extensive, and surrounded by a flourishing hawthorn hedge; but there is not an interior fence on the premises, the whole presents a single field, devoted to all the various purposes of agriculture. No part of it is allotted to pasture, properly speaking, as his cattle are fed in their stalls and never suffered to roam over the fields; and the advantages of his system are thus given: Formerly there were seven miles of interior fence to be kept in repair, but by keeping the cattle up the whole of this expense is saved. Formerly sixty acres of this farm were devoted to pasturage; but now, a greater number of cattle, by one-third, are kept upon the products of twenty acres, and the cattle are in the best condition.

The saving by these means is enormous, and the immense advantages arising from it too apparent to be dwelt upon. During the summer the cattle are fed upon grass, green oats, or barley, cut the day before and suffered to wilt in the sun; but the manure which is thus saved



will more than pay the extra expense and trouble. The farm is most highly cultivated, and every kind of grain and vegetable has a place.

When a man's land is all tillage and mowing, there is no doubt of the great economy of the soiling system; but when a farm contains many acres of broken pasture lands, which have never been subjected to the plough, and a small proportion, relatively, of mowing and tillage land, the system cannot profitably be adopted. Yet all farmers will find it good policy to have a small quantity of land devoted to green crops, to be fed out to their milch cows in case of drought or partial failure of their pastures, or rather to keep up a full flow of milk as the feed in the pastures becomes old and tough.

*Boston Cultivator.*

#### POTATOES.

The following directions for cooking Irish potatoes, which, by the bye, is not such an indifferent matter as some people seem to think, are taken from the Southern Agriculturist, and come, we warrant it, from the pen of a master, or mistress, in the culinary art:

"An untinned iron saucepan is always preferable for boiling potatoes. In preparing them they should never be peeled, or they cannot be well cooked, and much of their nutritious quality will be lost; they only require to be washed clean, and at farthest to be lightly scraped. After soaking for about an hour, put them into the saucepan with cold water enough to cover them, and when it begins to boil (which is the chief point to be observed in the cooking of them), let a tea-cup full of cold water (rather more or less according to the quantity) be put in, which will check the boiling and allow time for the potatoes to be done all through, without their being in any danger of breaking; when they are sufficiently soft, which may be known by trying them with a fork, pour off the water, and let the saucepan with the potatoes continue for a short time over a gentle fire, and the heat will cause any remaining moisture to evaporate, when, after having been peeled, they will be fit for table. By this method of cooking (if strictly adhered to) they will be found, especially if of a good kind, to be very mealy, floury, and delicately tasted."

#### USEFUL INFORMATION TO GARDENERS.

To prevent birds destroying your seed-beds, place thin *white strings*, such as is commonly used in shops, across the beds, about an inch above the ground, fixed tight by wooden pegs. Where feathers, dead birds suspended, and other devices, have failed, this effectually scares the marauders.—*Magazine of Domestic Economy.*

VOL. 2—5

#### PROVENDER.

Our farmers are beginning to understand that there is as much management necessary in taking care of a crop as in making one. Fodder, shucks, and corn-stalks, that formerly were only used to be *picked* by the cattle, and trampled into manure, are now carefully cut, soaked, mixed with meal, and fed away in troughs. Twelve years ago, we bought a barn full of shucks for \$1 75, at a country sale, and were laughed at for our bargain; the same quantity, now, would sell for thirty or forty dollars. Corn-stalks, that used to be considered fit only for manure, are now found to make excellent food, when cut and steamed. The Editor of the Farmer in recommending the use of this article says, "We boldly venture upon the assertion, that if a bushel of stalks, cut into pieces of an inch in length, either *soaked* in boiling water, or steamed, with a slight sprinkling of salt, were given three times a day to each head of cattle, that they would maintain the animals in good keeping condition."

We verily believe, that, by a saving of that which used to be wasted, a third of the marketable crop is sold that was formerly required for home consumption, and, that by still greater attention, another third may be added to it.

#### CHANGE OF SEEDS.

We some time since copied an article from the Louisville Journal (a paper, by the way, whose agricultural department is proving its celebrated Editor to be a universal genius) recommending the importation of northern seeds, for the purpose of expediting the growth of plants. We ventured to express the opinion, that this object would be more effectually obtained by the use of southern, than northern seeds, and quoted some authorities which we thought sustained us in the position. The purport of those authorities was, that seed obtained and transmitted a quickening impulse from the climate and soil in which they were cultivated; hence, we inferred, that seeds, raised under the vegetative powers of a southern sun, would acquire a capability of growth that would stead them, for a while, even under less genial influences. But the Journal argues that the northern is shorter, quicker, and more vegetative than the southern summer, and, therefore, that we have drawn an erroneous conclusion from the premises. In this opinion, too, he is backed by an article from an able pen in the 12th number of the first volume

of the Planter. Struck by the plausibility of the argument, and borne down by the weight of authority, we were about to abandon our proposition, when we met with unexpected support in the following communication addressed to the Journal. Reinforced as we are by this statement of *facts*, we shall not retreat, yet, awhile at least, from our first position.

For the Louisville Journal.

*Gentlemen*,—You have frequently urged your agricultural readers to adopt the system of a frequent change of seed for every kind of crop. The utility of this is not disputed, as far as I have seen, by any of your correspondents; but there seem to be conflicting opinions as to the sources of supply—perhaps not so much as to the sources of supply, as with regard to the cause why such a change is beneficial. One writer, “A Jefferson Farmer,” says that grain, the produce of a northern latitude, transported to a southern climate, there ripens sooner than a native. The reason is, that in the short summers of the north it had learned to perfect itself speedily, while the southern plant, relying on its long summer, got addicted to lazy habits. This, I believe, he stated as the result of his own experience; and I have no experience in a similar latitude to guaranty a counter opinion. In Scotland it has been long known and practised on, that seed from a warmer climate carried to a colder, ripen earlier than the native, and *vice versa*. The farmers on the head-waters of the Scottish streams are in the habit of receiving from the sea-side, annually, such a supply of seed grain as, when sown on their own farm, produces as much as will sow the whole farm the next year; that is, if they sow each year one hundred bushels, they will procure ten bushels from a warmer climate. These produce ninety bushels. Then the ten bushels of next year make their whole seed, and the growth of the farm is not sowed more than once. Potatoes are never a great crop when they ripen fast; so the farmers on the sea-side, to prevent this, get their potato plants annually from these highland farmers, who purchase their grain for change. And about the first of March, the half-way inns are thronged. There they meet and exchange loads; the sea-side farmers carrying potatoes down, and the moorland farmers taking oats, &c. up.

P.

#### ORCHARDS.

We have insisted much on the practicability and policy of raising our own fruit. We are fully satisfied that our climate imparts a higher flavor to every kind of fruit, even the apple and the pear, than can be obtained in a more northern

latitude. Nature, in truth, has done so much for us that we think it unnecessary to do any thing for ourselves, and here rests the mistake.

We have reason to believe that our exertions in this behalf have not been altogether fruitless, and further to assist those, who have determined to postpone no longer the setting out of a young orchard, we copy the following directions given by Mr. Buckminster, the experienced Editor of the Massachusetts Ploughman, to Mr. Parker, which we presume will do as well for Mr. Anybody else:

“To secure the *best* trees he must be the *earliest* man on the nursery ground—he should select none which have been growing *more* than three years since budding or grafting—take the most thrifty looking and those best shaped; those which prove clearly that they were not idle last season. When he has carefully taken up his trees, not by pulling so hard as to break the roots near the stump—he should bury them in some cool or shaded place till the first of May, unless the leaf puts out sooner; then the earth will be more warm and mellow and the roots may be carefully covered, in their natural position, with fine mould. One person should hold the tree while another is sifting on the mould, and the holder should occasionally shake the whole body of the roots that no crevices be left to expose them to the open air.

“In making holes for the trees it is not necessary to dig deep, and but very little of the subsoil need to be taken out; but to guard the body from the winds and the roots from too much warmth or desiccation, a mass of straw, stack hay, coarse manure, or something of the kind should be placed about the tree on the surface; this will check evaporation, keep the earth light as well as moist, and will prove a very efficient support against the winds, and far better than any stake to which they can be tied; for a little racking will never injure them while the litter is close about their roots. Some make a practice of staking up young trees to guard them from the cattle. But if cattle are to be turned in, the stakes alone should be set for them to rub against, since young trees are too costly to be used as cards for cattle.

“The trees are now well set and supported. What next? Shall the field be seeded with rye and grass and be reaped, mown, and pastured for four or five years to prove the trees and see how hardy they are?—a common *practice*, time out of mind—and to make it *perfect* the young trees, which are found standing at the end of that term, should all be pulled up and burned in a heap, for they will not be large enough for firewood.

“But Mr. Parker will take care to keep the



ground about the roots in tillage for many years if he would be repaid for his trouble; and he will think it no more than reasonable to treat a young apple tree, on which he has expended one dollar, with as much attention as he treats a hill of corn which costs him but one cent. For many years the grass must not be allowed to take possession of the soil; for by this ninety-nine young orchards in a hundred have been rendered wholly worthless.

"When trees are well set, and cultivated as well as a favorite field of corn usually is, they will grow one foot in height during the first summer! Yet most men who set out trees seem perfectly satisfied if they exhibit a single green leaf the first season."

#### NEW METHOD OF MAKING BREAD.

Among the new inventions and contrivances of which I have lately heard, is something which I believe bids fair to become universally useful to the city and country and the world, and that is, a new method of making good light sweet bread. All the world knows, that one of the most difficult and perplexing matters to house-keepers, is to have good emplings or yeast for bread. Now, the invention is this:—Take an acid like cream of tartar, I mean simply an acid in the form of a powder, and rub a sufficient quantity of this dry and powdered acid into a proper quantity of dry flour. Then wet the flour and put in your alkali, potash, or any fixed alkali. The valuable part of the discovery is this, the acid and alkali will not effervesce until the loaf is baked, when the acid is rubbed into the flour in a dry state. The experiment is worth trying. I assure you that a most delicious bread is produced, light, sweet, and good, in this manner, from any good flour or meal you use, wheat, rye, or Indian corn. Cream of tartar may be used and saleratus for the purpose of trying it. Nothing can be more healthful than this bread. The inventor is a baker by trade, and I believe it will come into use everywhere. Try it yourselves by rubbing into your flour, in a perfectly dry state, some cream of tartar, and then mixing the batter with whatever liquid you please, milk, buttermilk, or water, and adding a little saleratus. You will have an excellent, toothsome, and wholesome bread.—*Boston paper.*

From the Farmers' Cabinet.

#### HORN-AIL.

*Mr. Editor,*—Having persuaded myself that the practice of boring the horns and applying spirits of turpentine, &c. in the disease called horn-ail, which is so very prevalent in America, is entirely wrong in principle, and has the most pernicious consequences in practice, I deem it not improper to recommend, by the means of

your valuable periodical, a system of cure by which, during a long veterinary practice, both in France and in Philadelphia, New York and Harrisburg, I have been successful in most cases; while by the common way of proceeding *no animal is saved*, some either not having been attacked by that disease, or getting cured by nature itself.

This disease is also called the "red water," or blood in the back or loins, and arises principally from cattle being at grass during the summer on lots which are very dry and without shade, and from their being exposed to excessive heat of the sun and to great cold in the winter time; there are various other causes, as moory pastures, moist weather, &c. to all which cattle in this country are generally exposed; sour and mouldy hay, the exclusive feeding on corn-stalks, also contributes a good deal to this disorder.

As this disease is of an inflammatory character, the application of spirits of turpentine and the like, which *produce* inflammation, is entirely wrong. Boring the horns is at most curing *symptoms* and not the *disease*. I recommend to every owner of cattle the following mode of cure, tried by me a good many times with success:

When the animal is observed to be suffering from this disorder, one or two quarts of blood, according to the size of the animal, are to be drawn immediately from a neck vein; then two table-spoonsful of the following powder are to be given three times every day, the powder being previously dissolved in a pint of lukewarm water; this to be continued until the animal recovers:

Glauber salts,	6 ounces.
Cream of tartar,	2 "
Purified saltpetre,	2 "
Powdered root of althæa,	1½ "

It is necessary besides, to rub the animal frequently during the disease, principally on the back. But if the animal should be costive, either of the following clysters is to be given:

Take a handful of camomile flowers, two handfuls of flax seed; boil them in two quarts of water, strain them, and add eight ounces of linseed oil and three table-spoonsful of common salt. This clyster is to be applied by means of a syringe.

Should these articles not be at hand, take one quart of wheat bran, pour two quarts of boiling water on it, strain, and add eight ounces of flax seed oil and two ounces of common salt. This clyster is to be lukewarm when applied to the rectum or straight gut, by the means of a syringe or a fit-funnel.

JOSEPH FIEHRER,  
Veterinary Physician.

Harrisburg, Oct. 6, 1841.

What affinity is there between this "horn-ail" and the well known distemper to which all

foreign cattle are subject in our region? The symptoms are very similar, and we believe the causes assigned for the one frequently produce the other. The recipe is worth a trial, especially as we know no other that can be recommended.

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HERNLEY'S PATENT DOUBLE SHEARED  
PLOUGH CULTIVATOR.

This is a machine for hoeing corn and potatoes, cotton and tobacco, invented by a German Farmer in Pennsylvania. It is said to save more than half the labor usually bestowed upon those crops, and numbers testify, that, in the culture of potatoes, the saving of labor is equal to three-fourths of that usually applied.

"It finishes," it is said, "each row by once going over it, and the shears may be set so as to accommodate themselves to any distance between the rows, and give any desired form to the hills, either flat, round, or conical. With this instrument one man will, on an average, in one day, with one or two horses, hoe from six to eight acres of corn in the most approved manner."

We do not believe all that we hear, but if one-half that is said about this machine is true, it is invaluable to the southern planter. We shall keep our eye upon it and make further inquiries concerning it.

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ONE NIGGER EQUAL TO TWO ENGLISHMEN.

An English minister happened not long since to be in New York, on his way to Washington, and behind his carriage there were two footmen dressed in livery. Their appearance first excited the attention, and then gradually increased the numbers of the crowd, till, at length, shouts and hurrahs were set up by the boys, who cried out, "Hurrah for the Englishmen! hurrah for the Englishmen! It takes two Englishmen to make one Nigger!" meaning that two English footmen were thought necessary to do the duty which they had been always accustomed to see one negro perform.—*Buckingham's American*.

"There is many a truth uttered in joke," and we are inclined to think that the foregoing anecdote is an illustration of the truth of the proverb. We are fully satisfied, that the most effective labor that can be introduced in the southern States, at least, is a coal-black negro. We know that the contractors on the James River Canal considered one negro equal to two Irishmen, which comes very near establishing the point.

A very intelligent Virginian, a devoted friend to agriculture, who has travelled over the best part of Europe, and paid great attention to the agriculture of Great Britain, declared to us, that there was no sort of comparison between the amount of work performed by our negroes and the best of the English laborers. We are satisfied that their institutions, not less than their advantages of soil and climate, enable the southern States to afford agricultural products cheaper than any other part of the world.

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To the Editor of the Southern Planter:

Dear Sir,—The time has arrived, when we must contrive some plan to lessen the great destruction of wood that is consumed in our common fire-places, and in particular, those of our servants. The expense of transporting the wood alone, without taking into consideration the value thereof, is an immense tax on the farmer. But how this is to be remedied I know not, unless it can be by a cheap stove, constructed in some respects like the Dutch stove, but with a door sufficiently large to give light as well as warmth to the room, and which is the more necessary to our servants, as we cannot afford them candles to burn.

The art of making stoves has been brought to great perfection; but those that I have seen, although well calculated to add comfort to a chamber or a drawing-room, are not fitted for the accommodation of our servants. We want a cheap and durable article, and I hope that some of your correspondents will give us some useful hints on this subject. A FARMER.

Feb. 2, 1842.

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CORN.

We pledged ourselves, in our last, for at least one communication on the cultivation of this important crop. To enable us to redeem this pledge, we applied to our old friend, Mr. Thomas Dicken, for the benefit of his experience. Our object is to make the Planter a *practical* work, and when we were requested by a subscriber to furnish directions for the cultivation of a crop, upon which a great many theoretical opinions have been advanced by men who never succeeded in making a good one, we knew no better way of serving him, than by applying to an individual, who had devoted his life wholly and solely to the cultivation of the soil, and who, from the humble station of an overseer, had raised himself by dint of skill and industry to the station of an independent landed proprietor. Mr. Dicken does not pretend to be a learned man, (indeed he



pretends to nothing, for his worth is only exceeded by his modesty), nor is he such in the usual acceptation of the term. But, if a thorough knowledge of his business, if the information to be gathered by a mind naturally strong and observant, devoted wholly for a length of time to a particular pursuit, can entitle a man to the character of being well informed upon that subject, then would we say, that, passing by mere theorists and users of high sounding terms, we had applied, for the desired information, to the most "learned" man of our acquaintance. In this opinion, too, of Mr. Dicken's agricultural knowledge, we are backed by the *Henrico Agricultural Society*, who awarded him the highest premium offered at their fall meeting for the best cultivated farm.

The following is the amount of the advice offered by Mr. Dicken to our correspondent:

Plough your land well and deep, if possible, during the fall and winter, especially if it be stiff and wet. Harrow it freshly in the spring, and, with a single plough, throw two furrows together in ridges, five feet apart—level down the top with a light harrow—open your rows on the top of the ridge, and plant your corn from two to two and a half feet apart, according to the strength of your land—cover it to the depth of two inches, if planted early, and a little deeper if put in later, when the ground is warmer—follow now with your manure, and sprinkle it as you can afford, all along on the drill, and leave it uncovered on the surface.

As soon as the corn has grown about two inches out of the ground, run a furrow close on each side of it with a single plough, turning the earth from the corn, and ploughing deep, say six or seven inches—follow with the hoes, and weed it clean. As soon as the corn gets foul again, run a furrow on each side, turning the earth *towards* the corn, and lapping the furrows; this smothers the grass, whilst the corn will be too high to be covered up—continue then to plough up the whole space between the rows. You are now done with the plough. When the grass again makes its appearance, run your cultivators between the rows. A cultivator with three teeth may be worked as deep as the single plough, especially, if the land has been well broke—follow with the hoes, and weed it thoroughly. The cultivation is now completed.

It is *possible*, that the crop may sometimes be benefitted by another running of the cultivators,

but if the work has been well done, such a rain, as would bake the land, or grow the grass, would make the corn.

Never fail to work your land on account of dry weather, but be very cautious of stirring it when it is too wet.

Mr. Dickens cultivates a highland, grey soil, moderately light; flat or meadow land he would always bed. He plants, and prefers, an improved species of the old fashioned gourdseed. He selects his seed with great care from the best stalks, taking only the upper ear. He prefers planting on ridges, because, he likes to get his crop as forward as possible; he thinks the ridges, becoming dryer and warmer by being drained, have a tendency to quicken vegetation.

He prepares his seed by adding a pint of tar to five gallons of boiling water, and stirring in the corn when it becomes lukewarm. It is then taken out, and rolled in ashes—the tar protects it from birds, and the ashes counteract the injurious action of the tar, if any exists, in retarding vegetation.

Mr. Dicken prefers one stalk to every two feet to closer planting, averring, that, in an average of years, it will make the most corn.

So much for Mr. Dicken's mode of cultivating corn. Although we have great faith in the man, we by no means intend to assert that his practice may not be improved, and we hope that those who differ from him, will throw all the light they can upon a subject so fraught with interest to the farmers of Virginia and the South.

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For the Southern Planter.

*Mr. Botts*,—During a trip to Richmond and its vicinity, last summer, I heard a good deal of complaint relative to the rotting of grapes after they had gotten nearly ripe. In fact, I saw very many fine looking vines, heavily laden, but from which scarcely a sound grape could be gathered. On returning home I found my vines also heavily laden, and that too with sound, nice grapes.

The reason of this, I think, is, my vines are trained *high*—the different branches three feet distant from each other are suffered to run as far as nature permits them. It is evident, if managed in this way they occupy more ground, which is a matter of no small importance to persons in town or its vicinity; but if a smaller number of vines will answer the same, and perhaps a better purpose, where is the loss? The wind in March blew down one of my vines, which, falling over the fence was very much injured by the cows. This vine grew very thick

and bunchy. It also bore very abundantly, but the grapes all rotted and fell.

My vines were obtained from the neighborhood of Richmond, and are of different kinds.

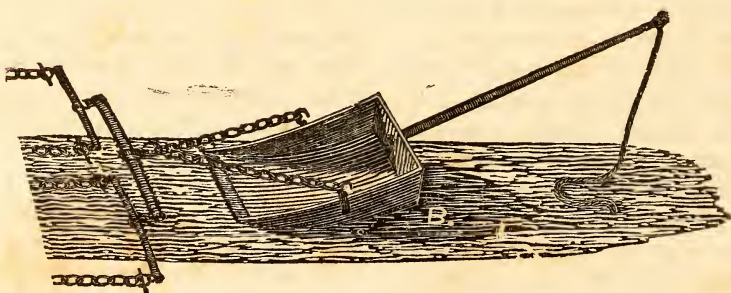
Respectfully, P. B. WHITE.

Nottoway, Va. January, 1842.

P. S.—Since writing the above, I have observed in the last number of the Planter, "A

Sovereign Remedy for the Mange in Hogs." I have succeeded, more than once, in curing this disease, by greasing my hogs with the outside of old, fat bacon. But little preparation is required. The hogs, of course, must be caught and held fast. Then take your slice of bacon and rub them all over, particularly the parts most affected. A little fire may be necessary to warm the bacon. P. B. W.

### MOLLEBART.



The implement represented in the engraving, well known to most of our readers as a "scoop," or "scraper," figures largely in English works of agriculture, under the more imposing name of Mollebart. Here, it is confined to the canal and road contractor. In Europe, it is used by the farmer, for the purpose of levelling the mounds and ridges, and filling up the sinks and hollows of his fields. Wherever dirt or loose stones are to be removed, it is infinitely preferable to carts or any other contrivance for the purpose. Some persons may never have seen, or heard of, this simple implement, whilst few, perhaps, have applied it to the *agricultural* purposes to which it is adapted. Whenever it is used for levelling ridges or hillocks, care should be taken first to remove and afterwards to replace the surface soil.

The Mollebart is used as an agricultural implement, especially in Holland and Flanders, where it is much esteemed. It should be made of thick, strong plank, the bottom covered with thin iron bands or plates, and the front edge

made thin and strongly plated with iron. The bottom should be made rather convex, so as to slide more easily. Two iron hooks are securely fastened to the centres of the sides, from which a couple of chains proceed, and unite in a double bar in front, as is exemplified in the engraving. The handle is five or six feet long, and the rope fourteen or fifteen. The operator approaches the earth to be removed, bearing upon the handle, to keep the front raised and free, until he wants to fill the scoop, which he effects, without stopping his horses, by simply elevating the handle, thereby entering the front or cutting edge. As soon as this is accomplished, he again depresses the handle, and proceeds with his load to the place of deposit. To empty the vehicle, he elevates the handle, and lets it go, retaining hold of the rope. By this operation, the front edge catches in the earth, and the scoop is drawn over and reversed, emptying the load completely out. The rope is now used to draw the scoop back to its former position, when the driver proceeds to fetch another load.



A skilful hand will spread the earth at the same time that he deposits it; this is done by holding the rope so that the handle shall not fall over, at once, but remain for a short time in an erect position. The load is thus delivered gradually, and laid level by the edge of the instrument scraping over it.

The usual size of a scoop for two horses is about three feet every way—in such, a load of about five hundred pounds will be removed at every turn.

#### DRIVING NAILS INTO HARD WOOD.

We have lately seen another experiment of driving nails into hard seasoned timber fairly tried. The first two nails, after passing through a pine board, entered about one inch, and then doubled under the hammer; but, on dipping the points of the other six or eight nails into lard, every one was driven home without the least difficulty.

Carpenters who are engaged in repairing old buildings sometimes carry a small lump of lard or tallow for this purpose on one of their boots or shoes.—*New Genesee Farmer*.

The Editor of the Mechanic suggests that that which causes the nail to enter readily will occasion it to draw out easily. This may be the case with lard or oil, but if the driver will merely wet the nail in his mouth, the same facility of entrance will be effected, and the rust, that ensues, will rather increase the tenacity of its hold. A small piece of bees-wax rubbed over a wood-screw, (an iron screw that works in wood is so called,) will occasion it to turn, both in and out, with great ease. Its threads are generally sufficient to give it hold; and it is sometimes a convenience to turn it out readily. This may be effected at any time if the screw was put in with wax.

#### VIRGINIA BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

We have awaited with, some anxiety, the action of our Legislature upon the bill proposing to pay the expenses of the members of our Board of Agriculture; for we were well assured, that, without a passage of that bill, we would never see another meeting of that Board. It was asking rather too much, even of Virginia liberality, that gentlemen should leave their homes to come here, *at their own expense*, for the public good; and they very naturally felt that the honor of a station, which was so little appreciated, would hardly compensate them for the sacrifices it in-

involved. We know the almost peculiar prejudices of our people against legislative interference, and we confess ourselves not altogether free from the prevailing feeling. When this Board was first organized, we did not object to it, because, although we anticipated no good, we could not see any evil likely to arise from it. But since we witnessed the zeal, the ardor, and the ability, manifested by some of the members of this Board, which has been so happily selected, and since, moreover, we have read in their report a detail of the plan they design to pursue, we unhesitatingly pronounce that, in our opinion, it is to do much for Virginia agriculture. They propose to obtain and report a full account of the agricultural statistics of the State. For this purpose, they lay the State off into eight districts, and assign a member of the Board to each; it is his business to propound a list of printed inquiries to the best farmers in his district, and to use all other means in his power to procure satisfactory answers to those inquiries. The information, thus obtained, will be furnished to the Board at its general meeting, whose business it will be to submit to the Legislature a report, founded upon these materials. The plan is exactly what we have heretofore chalked out for ourselves; and we cannot, therefore, hesitate to express our approbation of it. We, too, design to perambulate the State, collect agricultural facts, and report them to our readers. We, therefore, start in the same race, and, if one might be allowed to jest with so grave a body, we would advise their excellencies to look out for the *distance pole*; although, we know that there is one amongst them, at least, an active, long-legged strider, that will keep us busy. But to their superiority of numbers and intellect, we oppose the active energy of an individual, devoted to a profession, upon which he is dependant for a livelihood. If, under such circumstances, they come within bowshot of the Planter, they may flatter themselves with the result.

It will be hard, indeed, if, between us, the agriculturists of Virginia are not enlightened.

But, jesting aside, we are delighted to find that these able gentlemen have devoted themselves to so practical an object, and one they are so well calculated to effect. We flatter ourselves, that the Planter, enriched by the productions of the Virginia Board of Agriculture, is destined to vie with any of its numerous and able contemporaries.

The following is the list of subjects on which it is proposed to propound inquiries and obtain information:

- I. GEOGRAPHICAL STATE.
  1. General geographical description.
  2. Climate.
  3. Surface and soil.
  4. Minerals.
  5. Water.
- II. GENERAL MANAGEMENT OF LAND.
  1. Quantity of arable land, of meadow, of wood, of waste land.
  2. Size of farms.
  3. Rotation of crops, and the kind of cultivation.
  4. Depth and manner of ploughing, for preparation of different crops.
  5. Tillage of crops, and general management of each important one, from the seeding to the consumption or marketing.
- III. PRODUCTS AND PRICES OF CROPS.
  1. Usual produce per acre of different large crops, and general selling price.
- IV. IMPLEMENTS.
- V. FENCING AND ENCLOSING.
- VI. TILLAGE OF GROWING CROPS.
  1. General management, seeding, harvesting, marketing.
- VII. GRASS AND GRAZING.
  1. Natural meadows.
  2. Watered meadows.
  3. Mowing and hay.
  4. Artificial grasses, and their comparative value for hay or grazing.
- VIII. LIVE STOCK.
  1. Teams, or laboring animals.
  2. Animals raised for sale or farm supplies.
  3. Prevalent diseases, and their remedies.
- IX. DAIRY MANAGEMENT.
- X. WOODS AND WASTE LAND.
  1. Description.
  2. Uses and product.
- XI. NEW OR RECENT PROCESSES OR IMPROVED PRACTICES IN AGRICULTURE.
- XII. OBSTACLES TO IMPROVEMENT,
 

Including the operation of the laws or governmental regulations.
- XIII. MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF ANY THING OF INTEREST NOT INCLUDED IN ANY QUERY.

For the Southern Planter.

Fredericksburg, Va., Jan. 26, 1842.

Dear Sir,—It may interest some of your agricultural readers to know the value of property in Virginia a hundred and nineteen years ago. For this reason you have the following copy of

a letter from a man who was thoroughly acquainted with the subject.

Would you not do well to urge strongly upon the public the propriety of preserving by means of the press, such venerable records as may be mouldering away in old chests stowed in garrets and other obscure corners? Time is doing the work of the Sybil. Every day is silently but steadily lessening the amount of information which once gone can never be supplied. The general, leading points of our history, it may be said, are already secured—but it may be doubted whether the minuter details do not exercise as important an influence upon our welfare; for history has been aptly termed the finger of the past pointing out the course of the future, and it is as necessary to our comfort and security to become acquainted with the small sand-bars and lesser currents in the river of life, as with the islands and continents in the great ocean of human existence.

Your friend, respectfully,

J. MINOR.

NOTE.—Mr. Micaja Perry, to whom the letter was addressed, resided in Loudoun, and was an agent of the proprietors of the Northern Neck.

July ye 13th, 1723.

MR. MICAJA PERRY:

Sir,—I have already sent you an inventory of ye — estate. That it may appear the clearer before you I now send it you distinguished under its several species by w<sup>ch</sup> you and the gent<sup>l</sup>n concerned will be the better enabled to pass your judgments upon the value of it if they are in earnest to sell and can make a good title. However, I shall give you here the best acco<sup>t</sup> I can how the prices of Virginian estates run from man to man.

As for negroes I suppose you know the prices they are sold at well enough. Two years ago Colo. Page bought\* Bombesa men slaves, the finest that I ever saw, be tween ab<sup>t</sup> 18 and 28 years of age, not one exceeding thirty I dare say, of Capt. Francis Willis, agent of the African Company, at seventeen pounds per head. Last year I bought men for twenty; women eighteen, and girls of 10 and 12 years of age for 10 pounds per head. This year I know of no large quantities having been sold together. The small folks and middling people have been the only buyers. I have known Leves all single choice men bought for 20.£ apiece. The choicest have gone at 40.£. This hath been the rule with the sellers as far as I have heard. I doubt not, would I have taken a quantity, I might have had them considerably cheaper. You must know, the slaves that come from Gambia, such as Colo. Page had, are of a much larger size and have more sense and are more used to work,

\* The figures are illegible.



than any other. I would freely give at any time 40 sh. a head more for them than for the Cites.

As for cattle, there is no such thing as selling a stock together, for money. The common price for any young, fat cow in killing time, is thirty-five shillings cash: and for a steer, seven years old, fifty shillings. This you may be informed of by your masters when they buy fresh meat.

The horses and mares, you must understand, are of very small value among us. They swarm upon us, and are degenerated into such runts, that you may buy them as they run almost for anything. Not many years ago I sold six out of my pasture, to Doctor Lomax, of three years old, for shipping off, at 20s. per head. Some of these, you will observe, are very old, and some very young.

For hogs, I do not know what to say of them. As they run in the woods we esteem them little better than vermin, and 'tis not common to put them into the inventory of our estates. Indeed, after we have spent a barrel of corn upon them per hog to make them fit for killing, they will fetch you from 20s. to 25s. per head, the barrows and speyed sows, current money.

For the household goods, 'tis very old and mean, as you may very well conceive, having been under the use of such various hands.

Nine of the negroes, as I have already observed, are so much past their labor that they are rather a charge than anything else. Their levy and clothes come to more than they make. There are three of them at one place put in for a share, and at no place under two for a share and a lusty girl or boy to help out with their work, to boot; and yet the overseers grumble very much to allow anything for them.

The lands and plantations you have often had a particular account of. When Carey has got that plantation away, as no doubt (if he can make his title good,) but he will, though I will defend it to the uttermost if you will send me such orders, there will be but nineteen hundred acres, or thereabout, every plantation cleared quite out, and no timber left for building.

This is a true representation of this estate. Old Capt. Willis knows as well the value of a Virginian estate as any man. Let him but consider the great difference there is between land in those parts of the country and Glos'ter, where he lived; the low ebb that Tob'o is at; and the little income we make at this day of our Virginian estates; and I could almost agree he should set the value upon it himself.

I must confess that in consideration of having had this estate so long under my government; that the best of the slaves went hence with my brother's daughter, Loyd's first wife, and are very much related to several of my families of slaves; and having lands in plenty to settle them upon; I am very desirous to be the purchaser, and will pay the money in as little time

as they can reasonably desire it; and will give as much as any other person will offer at the estate entirely together: and I hope, if not for my sake, at least for my son, whom they seem to have very much in their esteem, and to whom this estate may probably come, they will let me have the first refusal of it.

Thus you have this affair as fully before you as I can set it, until I hear further from you about it.

I am your most humble servant,

ROBERT CARTER.

This is not the first curiosity that the elegant researches of our old friend have wrested from the wreck of antiquity. We, in common with the literary world, are indebted to him for many similar favors.

The article is not only curious, but instructive. We can gather from it the loose husbandry of our forefathers, the necessary attendant upon the consolidation of inordinate landed estates.

Notwithstanding the careless and wasteful system of cultivation that prevailed one hundred and forty years ago, the Virginia planter of that day invariably got rich; and how? By ripping up the golden goose: by robbing the rich virgin earth of all her fertility, and coining her soil into money. We must now repair the errors of our forefathers, and convert the money they have left us, into the soil, of which they robbed us. It will be a good exchange. The soil breeds faster than money, prolific as it is, at the present day.

As to the value of property, as here set forth, Mr. Carter's statements must be received with some grains of allowance. In the first place, the currency had not been inflated, and twenty shillings of 1723 meant something very different from twenty shillings of 1842. Again, if our friend will excuse the imputation upon the character of his "progenitor," we must remember that Mr. Carter is valuing property he is, evidently, very desirous of purchasing, and we think that other records of the value of agricultural articles at the time will prove, that purchasers, one hundred and forty years ago, were imbued with the same spirit of "cheapening," that they frequently manifest, at the present day.

#### MANURES.

We have received an excellent communication from Mr. James T. Jones, of Fluvanna, whom, by the bye, we take to be a thoroughly practical farmer, objecting to a plan of manuring recom-

mended by J. R. G., in a former number of the Planter.

Mr. Jones makes two prominent objections to the recommendation of J. R. G. to deposit litter at once upon the surface of the land, instead of first subjecting it to the trampling process of the farm yard. The first is that cattle would be deprived of the bedding, that is extremely conducive to their comfort, both in winter and summer, and *secondly*, that much of this litter, as corn-stalks, for example, would require a great length of time for the division and decay, necessary to their incorporation, and fertilizing effects. On the other hand, these articles, placed beneath the feet of your cattle, are cut up, and at the same time, become the absorbents of manure and urine, that would otherwise be lost. He goes on to say,

"I am no chemist, Mr. Editor, and, of course, can't tell, in all cases, the why and wherefore of these things, but I have tried, to the utmost of my means, for several years, most ways of making manure, and when and how to apply it. I have hauled out leaves and trash and spread on the surface. I have hauled earth of different qualities—ditch banks, some in the cattle-yard to mix with the manure, other immediately out to the land—I have hauled sand to clay, and clay to sand—in fact, the business of manuring in some way, (all ways are good, but some better than others,) has been my only *successful* means of restoring old worn-out land to a state of fertility. Upon the whole, I would say, to save labor, haul out all rich earth, ashes, every vegetable litter that is rotten, at once to the land; but all such things as corn-stalks, unrotted leaves, straw and weeds, into the stables, cattle-yards, and hog-pens. For every load of this weak litter, almost useless of itself, (except for a covering to retain moisture,) you will carry out a load, at least, of good strong manure; provided, always, you keep a sufficiency of well-fed stock—and, is this not an equivalent, at least, for the additional labor? I agree with 'J. R. G.' as also several, nay, most farmers, as to the propriety of surface application, but I prefer a slight admixture with the surface, more especially, if the manure is fine. For a time, I carried out, spread and fallowed in. This I did to avoid running the teams and carts upon the land after planting. But I have no doubt by this mode I lost half. I now haul out as soon as I think the manure has acquired sufficient strength, no matter whether rotten or not, deposit in piles, plough, when the time comes, then spread the manure before the harrow or cultivator. It is impossible to adopt a plan against which no objection can be seen,

but we must do some way, and can only select that course least objectionable."

Having held frequent conversations upon the subject with our correspondent, J. R. G. we will undertake to say, without waiting to consult him, that he has been slightly misunderstood, and that he and Mr. Jones are, in truth, not very far apart in their views. If we do not misapprehend, when J. R. G. speaks of the propriety of hauling out litter at once upon the land, he alludes only to that portion which is frequently hauled in, over and above what is required for bedding, to be worked up and trampled over in the farm-yard. From what we know of his opinions, we would as soon expect him to deprive his stock of their *food* as their *beds*. We believe, though, that he thinks the quantity of bedding may be much lessened by keeping cattle in stalls instead of yards. Their dung and urine he would collect, and throw into his compost heap. Consequently, he needs no other absorbents. What is to be done with the excess of litter and vegetable matter that may be industriously collected about a farm? Why, says J. R. G. haul it out and deposit it upon your land at once. By this means, you secure all the fertilizing properties of the litter, and, moreover, have the use of it as a "retainer of moisture," during the time that it would, otherwise, be idle in the farm-yard.

The following, from the Genesee Farmer, is not only scientific, but plain and practical. It is, we presume, from the pen of that distinguished gentleman, the Rev. Henry Coleman, so well known for his contributions to agriculture.

We hope no one will be deterred by the scientific title from a perusal of the article, nor by the little trouble that is required from instituting the experiments recommended.

#### AGRICULTURAL ANALYSIS.

To determine the value of soil, or to be able to correct any fault in the original constitution, or any deficiency arising from improper cultivation, it is necessary that the nature and proportion of the substances composing it should be understood. In agriculture this examination is termed analysis; and in a simple, yet still effectual method, may be practised by every farmer. The implements used are a pair of scales, accurate to the tenth part of a grain; a crucible; some muriatic acid, and a few small vessels of china or glass.

The earth to be tested by the farmer, should



be taken from a few inches below the surface, and be an average specimen of the field, or the soil to be examined. The quantity to be examined, say two or four hundred grains, is to be slightly pulverized or well mixed together. Put of this, two hundred grains in a crucible, and heat it to three hundred degrees of Fahrenheit, or bake it in an oven heated for bread for fifteen minutes; cool and weigh. This will show the absorbent power of the soil, and as this is depending mainly on the animal and vegetable matter, if the loss is considerable, it is decisive proof in this respect of fertility. The absorbent power varies from one to twelve per cent.

After weighing, heat it again in the crucible to a red heat, and until the mass shows no bright or sparkling particles, stirring it with a glass or iron rod; cool and weigh, and the loss will be the animal and vegetable matter in the soil.

Take two hundred grains of the dried earth, mix it thoroughly with a gill of water, by stirring it for several minutes. Let it stand for three minutes, and turn off the muddy water into another glass. Dry the sediment in the first glass at high heat, weigh, and it gives the silica contained in the soil. Let the water turned off settle clear, turn it off, dry it at a high heat and weigh: this gives the alumina or clay.

Put into a suitable glass or flask, one-fourth of a gill of muriatic acid and water in equal proportions, and balance the scales carefully. Put into this mixture one hundred grains of the earth, let it stand till all the effervescence has ceased, which will sometimes be an hour, or more; carefully note the weight required to again balance the scales, and that may be set down as the weight of carbonic gas expelled, say six grains. Then as forty-five is to fifty-five, so is this weight to that of the base, or the lime. In this case the lime would be seven and one-third per cent.

To ascertain if the earth contains iron, stir the muriatic acid and water with a strip of oak bark, and if iron is present in the liquid, the bark will turn dark. To ascertain the quantity, put in prussiate of potash, till it no longer forms a blue precipitate, let it settle; heat the deposit to redness, carefully weigh the remainder, which is oxide of iron.

To determine the presence of gypsum, take one hundred grains of earth, mix one-third the quantity of powdered charcoal, keep it at a red heat in a crucible for half an hour. Then boil the earth in a pint of water for thirty minutes, filter the liquor, and expose it for some days in an open vessel. A white deposit will be sulphate of lime, and the weight will determine the proportion.

These processes are all simple, and can be performed by any one. By them we obtain, 1st, the absorbent powers; 2d, the amount of animal vegetable matter; 3d, the silica or sand; 4th,

the alumina, or clay; 5th, the carbonate of lime; 6th, the oxides of iron; and 7th, the gypsum, or plaster of Paris. The salts exercise a great influence on vegetation; but as they principally depend on the animal and vegetable matter in the soil, and as the determining their qualities and kinds are too difficult for the analysis of the farmer, the processes are omitted. The above ingredients are all that exert a marked influence on the fertility of soils, and on their proper proportion its goodness depends. If soils contain too much silica or gravel, they are porous; and if too much clay, retentive. The last is usually the worst fault, and may be known by the water standing upon it after rains, remaining unsettled for a long time, owing to the clay held in solution. Wheat winter kills, on such soils; on calcareous, gravelly ones, rarely. Good soils usually contain from sixty-five to seventy-five of silica; from ten to sixteen of alumina; from four to ten of lime, and varying proportions of vegetable matters, animal and mineral salts, &c. The analysis of soils, forms one of the most decided steps in the improvement of agriculture, as it clearly points out what is wanting to remedy any defect, and give ease of working, and abundance in product. Every farmer should understand the nature and composition of his soil, and may do so with little time, and at a mere trifle of expense.

#### THE POTATO.

We find several of our most valued northern exchanges agreeing in the superiority, after all, of an old variety of potato called the La Plata or long red. Amongst its other valuable qualities it is said to retain its distinctive traits and characteristics in spite of neighboring cultivation. This circumstance is explained by the fact, that it is later than any other variety, and consequently, is in bloom when no other potato is in the same state. A mixture of two varieties, it is supposed, can only take place by the fecundating action of the pollen which is evolved and received only in a state of bloom.

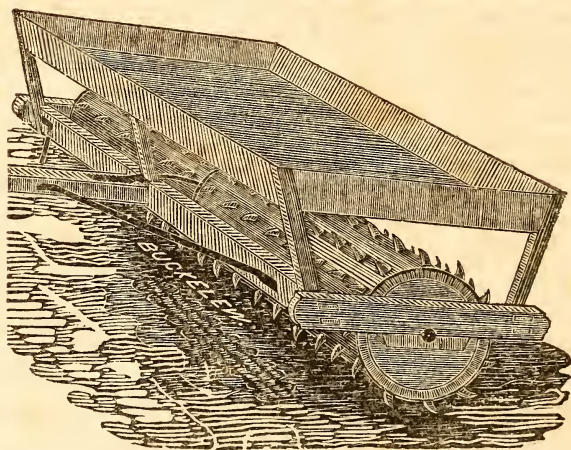
From all we can gather from the best authorities we should prefer this variety to any other for our late crop.

#### MILLET.

A gentleman of Chesterfield has deposited with us, for sale, a small parcel of millet seed. It is a crop with which we are personally unacquainted. It is said to make very fine hay, and to be admirably adapted to our soil and climate. An unknown writer, in the January number of the Cultivator, recommends it to southern farmers

as more profitable than herds-grass, timothy, or clover. He says, "For ten years past I have never failed to obtain a good crop of *millet*, when the ground was *rich* and properly prepared; viz: by twice ploughing, and harrowing clean. I usually sow a bushel to the acre, and cut it as the seed begins to turn yellow; cure it as any other hay, and horses prefer it to clover or timothy. It matures in about sixty days, and may be sown from April until the first of August."

### CONKLIN'S ROLLING HARROW.



We have favored our readers with a cut of what is called, to the north, Conklin's revolving harrow, of which a correspondent of the Albany Cultivator speaks in the following terms:

**CONKLIN'S ROLLING HARROW.**—I must not withhold my tribute of praise to this admirable implement, though rather expensive; freight, &c. about \$120. Mine has been in use five years, and passed over one hundred and fifty acres or more each year, and is now as good as new; having, as I believe, been worth the cost every year. In addition to scarifying meadows, rolling small grain, &c. I pass it over my *corn*, when from two to six inches high, and consider the operation better than a ploughing, and will easily go over ten acres in a day. It leaves it in fine order for ploughing. Some of my neighbors, seeing it, have substituted a log with spikes, which answers very well, and costs but little.

I think the smooth roller very essential to good farming, and am glad to see them getting in fashion generally.

I am, your obedient servant,

N. B. MOORE.

Augusta, Ga., Nov. 11, 1841.

We know not to what part of the implement Mr. Conklin sets up an exclusive claim. A spiked roller has long been in use in this part of the country, and is much esteemed by many judicious farmers. Some of our best wheat growers use it every spring after the frost is out of the ground, to loosen the roots of their wheat and grass. For this purpose, a large gum log is prepared about four feet in length and eighteen inches in diameter. It should, if possible, be passed through a turning-lathe, and an iron gudgeon set true in each end—let the gudgeon be an inch and a half in diameter, and turned off also in the lathe. Holes should now be bored with a half-inch augur in the surface of the roller, four inches apart, those in one row breaking the row before it. A blacksmith will manufacture the teeth of square iron, nine inches long, with a shoulder four inches from one end, and five from the other; just under the shoulder, the teeth should be three-quarters square, and tapered to either end—the short, ragged end should be driven in the roller, with a sett, to the



shoulder: the long end may be either curved or straight, at pleasure. A strong wooden frame must now be made, in which the roller may revolve. A hole bored straight and true through the end pieces, will make a capital box for the journals of the gudgeon. It is well to so construct the frame that weight may be added or removed at pleasure.

We have been thus minute in our directions, because, we desired to enable a farmer, by means of a common blacksmith and carpenter, to construct an implement, at a cost of thirty dollars, that will answer every purpose, we believe, of Mr. Conklin's \$120 machine.

This implement is not only more effectual in breaking the clods of newly ploughed ground than the common harrow, but is invaluable, as we before hinted, for working wheat and grass.

#### COTTON GIN.

The gin of the celebrated Whitney, to which, by the bye, the cotton crop owes much of its importance, is likely to be superseded, it is said, by an improvement invented and used at Lowell. This new machine has been carried to England, and is now at work in Leeds and Manchester, affording another example of Yankee ingenuity.

#### REAPING MACHINE.

Mr. Solon Robinson seems to think that Mr. Hussey's reaping machine is quite a pretty thing, but nothing in comparison with a machine, somewhere in the west, that gathers, thrashes and fans the wheat at one operation. If it travels through the Yankee States, we may expect to see it so improved as to grind and eat the grain before it gets to the south.

#### SCALDED OR CLOTTED CREAM.

Take a pan of perfectly sweet milk, twelve hours old, with the cream on; stand it on a stove or furnace over a gentle fire till slightly scalded, "when a ring will appear in the cream of the size of the bottom of the pan;" then take it off and let it stand till cold; skim off the cream and it is fit for use. When used as an accompaniment with fruit, tarts, &c. it is sweetened to suit the taste. This cream is esteemed a great luxury in London. It is brought in by dairymen, and sold at a high price.—*New Genesee Farmer.*

#### CLEANING GLASS.

The French mode of cleaning fine glass utensils, &c. gives them great brilliancy. It is done

by finely powdered indigo, and dipping into it a moistened linen rag, with which the glass must be smeared, and wiped off with a perfectly dry cloth. As a substitute for this, fine sifted ashes, applied by a rag dipped in spirits, will also answer very well; but Spanish white is apt to roughen and injure the glass.

The Louisville Journal states that the vineyard of J. Davis, Esq. of one acre and a half in extent, produced this year 1170 gallons of the pure juice of the grape. In Europe 400 to 500 gallons per acre are considered an extraordinary yield.

#### LEGISLATIVE ACTION.

In our last, we published an article on this subject, from an anonymous correspondent, signing himself an "Old Virginia Farmer." We have this morning received a communication, signed, "Rusticus," animadverting upon the piece in terms which we decline to publish, simply for this reason; it would necessarily lead to a rejoinder of a character entirely personal. In taking this course, we hope that "Rusticus" will understand that we intend no disrespect to his communication, nor do we even mean to intimate, that its extreme causticity is not warranted by the character of the article against which it is directed. The truth is, Rusticus is too liberal, when he absolves us from all blame in the matter, and most egregiously wrong in his supposition, that we consider ourselves bound to print all we receive. The article, we confess, ought to have been rejected for its use of *epithets*, of which Rusticus, so severely, and so justly, complains.

Our excuse for admitting the terms, "fools" and "brawlers" to be applied through the columns of the Planter, is, that we looked upon the whole article rather as a playful piece of badinage, than a serious intention to insult those who differed in opinion with the writer. Upon a re-perusal, we perceive more of venom and acrimony than we at first discovered, and can readily understand that it is calculated to insult those, who, like "Rusticus," have borne an active part in invoking the aid of legislative action for agriculture. The piece has attracted much commendation, for "Rusticus" is wrong in supposing that the author is singular in his opinions, and he is the only one who has as yet objected to the tone of the article; nevertheless, we recognise the justice of his complaint, and seek to render him all the retribution in our power,

by confessing our error, and assuring him that this oversight shall only render us the more vigilant to exclude every thing of a personal character from the columns of the Planter. Free, open and *spirited* communications we solicit; but harsh and vituperative denunciations, we shall always endeavor to exclude. Whenever, as in the present instance, a piece of such a character accidentally finds its way into our columns, we shall always prefer to take the burden of an apology on our own shoulders, to publishing a reply of a like character, thereby relieving our readers from all the unprofitable weariness of a personal controversy.

For the Southern Planter.

#### TOBACCO.

*Fluvanna County, Jan. 26, 1842.*

Mr. Editor,—You gave us in one of your late numbers, a short historical account of the tobacco plant, (technically *nicotiana tabacum*.) I propose, by your leave, to continue the subject, more as a matter of curiosity and amusement, than of instruction, for your numerous readers.

I will say nothing about its botanical description, and but little of its medical qualities. A most strange infatuation must have governed the first person, who could have persisted in its use long enough to have overcome its most disgusting taste. It is a strange fact in animal economy, that the most nauseous and unpalatable substances after long and continued use will become very pleasant to the palate. This plant was originally found in the hands of the native American savage, as an article of luxury; now it is sought for with great avidity by civilized man in almost every part of the globe. The priests of some tribes swallowed the smoke of this plant to excite in them the spirit of divination; they inhaled it until it produced a stupor of many hours. When they had recovered from it, they said they had held conference with the Devil, and had learned from him the course of future events. Their physicians also intoxicated themselves with it, and pretended that they had been admitted into the council of the gods, who revealed to them the event of diseases.

In 1559 tobacco was sent into Spain and Portugal by Hernandez de Toledo, and from thence it was carried into France, as a curiosity, by Jean Nicot, or Nicotius, ambassador at the court of Lisbon, whose name is now immortalized by its application to this genus of plants. From this period, its use spread rapidly in Europe—so much so, that the constituted authorities, both of Church and State, thought it necessary to interpose, that they might stop the extravagant indulgence in it, by the most rigid prohibition.

James the First, of England, besides writing a book against it, called his "Counterblast to Tobacco," gave orders that no planter in Virginia should cultivate more than one hundred pounds. Pope Urban the Eighth published a decree of excommunication against all who took snuff in the Church. Smoking was forbidden in Russia under penalty of having the nose cut off. In Switzerland a tribunal was instituted for the express purpose of trying transgressors in Tobacco. A Turk who was found smoking in Constantinople, was conducted through the streets of that city with his pipe transfixed through his nose. In the old Massachusetts colony laws, is an act imposing a penalty upon any one "who shall smoke tobacco within twenty poles of any house," or who shall "take tobacco in any inn or common victualling house, except in a private room, so as that neither the master of the house, nor any guest shall take offence thereat." In the early records of the Harvard University is a regulation of this kind, "No scholar shall take tobacco, unless permitted by the President, with the consent of their parents and guardians, and on good reason, first given by a physician, and then in a sober and private manner." It had its advocates at this time among the learned—Castor Duranti and Raphael Thorius both wrote Latin poems in its praise—the latter, one, entitled a "Hymn to Tobacco," in which he styles it, "the gift of Heaven and the ornament of earth." It obtained the reputation of a general panacea, almost for the whole catalogue of diseases which man is heir to. Dr. Venner, in a work, entitled, "*Via recta ad vitam longam*," published at London in 1638, gives a summary of the injury done by tobacco. "It drieth the brain, dimmeth the sight, vitieth the smell, hurteth the stomach, destroyeth the concoction, disturbeth the humors and spirits, corrupteth the breath, induceth a trembling of the limbs, exciteh the winde pipe, lungs and liver, annoyeth the milt, scorcheth the heart and causeth the blood to be adusted. In a word, it overthroweth the spirits, perverteth the understanding, and confoundeth the senses with sudden astonishment and stupidity of the whole body." A poetical phillippic, "Tobacco Battered," was published in the reign of King James, by Joshua Sylvester, in which he compares tobacco to gun-powder, and pipes to guns—making the mischief of the two equal. James the First, in his "Counterblast," warns his subjects, in a most earnest manner, "not to sin against God, and harm their own persons and goods, and render themselves scorned and contemned by strangers, who should come among them, by persevering in a custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, and baneful to the brain."

Tobacco has combined in it a great variety of constituents—and strange to tell, some animal matter, also, a peculiar acrid, volatile, colorless



substance, soluble in water and alcohol, not found in any other vegetable. Mr. Brodie found, by experiment, that the oil of tobacco, which Mr. Brande obtained by distillation of the leaves, and which he calls the empyreu matic oil, had a most deadly effect on animals. He says, that two drops of it, applied to the tongue of a young cat with an interval of fifteen minutes occasioned death. A single drop suspended in an ounce of water and injected into the rectum of a cat, produced death in five minutes. One drop suspended in an ounce and a half of mucilage and thrown into the rectum of a dog, produced violent symptoms, and the repetition of the experiment killed him. ORONOKO.

#### CURIOUS EXPORTATIONS.

The people of the United States are essentially an agricultural people. Yet how often has the singular spectacle of importing from Europe bread stuffs for our own citizens, been exhibited within the last few years. The tide has changed, and the current is setting now in an opposite direction. Cheese from New York has been sold in the Liverpool market in large quantities recently. During the last week, over one thousand kegs of lard were taken up in this city for exportation. The amount of flour constantly going abroad is very large. It assists to pay off our indebtedness to Europe for the millions of luxuries we import.

*Philadelphia North American.*

#### SHEEP-KILLING DOGS.

A young dog having wantonly bitten and mangled a large lamb, so that it died, was muzzled by one of my servants, tied to the dead lamb, for a day and a night, and severely beaten. He was entirely cured of his propensity for chasing sheep, and would never afterwards approach them.—*Judge Peters.*



#### AGENCY.

THOMAS P. SEGAR is not authorised to receive subscriptions for the second volume of this work. Mr. Segar's authority is dated in July, 1841, and ceased with the year. Notwithstanding Mr. Segar, in many instances, failed to pay over subscriptions, or even report the names of subscribers, that he obtained during the last year,

at his most earnest entreaty, we forbore to expose him, by publicly revoking the authority he held, especially, as in a letter written in December, he expressly declared, that, after what had passed, he would not *presume* to take subscribers for another year.

If, however, we choose to indulge our good nature to an unreasonable extent, it should be at our own expense, and not that of the public. We feel, therefore, morally bound by any payment made Mr. Segar before the circulation of this notice. We hope that any gentleman, who has Mr. Segar's receipt, and has not received the paper, will inform us of the fact, and feel assured, that the failure is attributable to our ignorance of his being a subscriber.

Our agents are required to report, at least, once a fortnight, and we will be obliged to any gentleman, who does not receive his paper within that time, after subscribing, to inform us of the fact. All our good nature has been absorbed by Mr. Segar, although he is the only agent of whom we have ever had cause to complain.

#### NOTICES.

For the many complimentary notices which the commencement of our second volume has attracted from the political press, in Virginia especially, we have no return to make except the homage of our heartfelt thanks. We never regret the narrow limits to which our space confines us so much, as when it constrains us to such a poor return for such favors.

#### RECEIPTS.

We are very often asked for receipts, and we have a great many letters to write for the purpose of enclosing them. Hereafter, the direction of any number of the paper (except the first) to any individual, will be a receipt in full for the year's subscription. We say, except the first, because, that is frequently sent as a specimen.

#### BACK NUMBERS.

We have at length completed the tedious job of our re-print, and are now busily engaged in mailing the back numbers to those to whom they are due. If any gentleman, entitled to get them, should fail to receive them in the course of the next ten days, he will please inform us of the failure, when the mistake shall be immediately corrected.

## Richmond Markets, February 17, 1842.

**BUTTER**—Mountain butter, wholesale 12½ a 16 cents for firkin; 20 cents for roll.

**COTTON**—8 a 9 cents per lb.

**COTTON YARNS**—Richmond and Manchester, (factory prices,) Nos. 4, 5 and 6, 20c.; 7, 8 and 9, 21c.; 10, 11 and 12, 22c.; 13 and 14, 23c.; 15 and 16, 24c.; 17, 25c.; 18, 26c.; 19, 28; and 20, 28 cents.

**CATTLE**—For cattle on the hoof, from \$4 to \$5 50, are the general prices. Mutton—There is great variation in the quality; indifferent sheep bring only from \$1 to \$2, while the finer qualities bring from that to \$5 per head.

**CHEESE**—8½ a 9 cents per lb. very scarce.

**FEATHERS**—38 a 40 cents per lb. for live geese.

**FISH**—Mackerel, No. 3, \$7. Herrings—No. 1, North Carolina, \$3 50; No. 2, \$3; Potomac cut, \$3 25. Shad, \$8 50 per barrel.

**FLOUR**—Demand limited; sales at \$5 87½ on the bank.

**GRAIN**—Wheat \$1 15 a \$1 20, are the prices now paid for good red and white. Corn, 55 to 60 cents. per bushel. Oats, from wagons and depot 50 cents. Very little grain coming into market.

**IRON**—Pig, \$25 to \$35; Swedes, \$100 per ton. English, \$85 to \$90; Tredegar, (Richmond manufactory,) \$90; Up Country bar, \$75 a \$80 per ton.

**MEAL**—65 to 70 cents per bushel.

**PROVISIONS**—Bacon—Old Smithfield dull at 6 cents; new city cured, 7½ a 8 cents, demand small; old Western sides, 3 a 5 cents, as to quality; shoulders, 2 a 4 cts.; demand for old sides fair. Lard, 7 a 8 cents, retail demand only.

**PLASTER**—Last sales at \$3 50 at Rocketts.

**STEEL**—American blistered \$135 to \$140 per ton.

**TOBACCO**—No change in prices to notice.—Breaks are increasing in quantity—but little improvement, if any, in quality. We continue our quotations: Lugs \$2 25 a \$2 50 and \$2 75; Leaf \$2 75 a \$6 25, extreme rates—general sales of Leaf at the inspections from \$3 a \$4; a great portion of common Leaf sells at from \$3 a \$3 25.

## FREIGHTS.

**NEW YORK**—Flour, per bbl. 25 cts.—very little going. Coal, 8 a 8½ cents per bushel. Tobacco, \$2 50 per hhd.; boxes 20 cts.; kegs 25 cents.

**PHILADELPHIA**—Flour, none going. Tobacco, \$2 50 per hhd.; 20 cts. for boxes; 25 cts. for kegs, none going. Coal, 7 cents per bushel, Richmond measure.

**ON THE CANAL**—To Lynchburg and intermediate places, 10 cents per 100 lbs.

## EXCHANGE.

**FOREIGN**—On London 16 a 17 per cent. premi.

**DOMESTIC**—New York Checks, 8½ premium.

Philadelphia, ¾ a 1 premium.

Baltimore, 5 premium.

North Carolina Bank Notes, par.

South Carolina, 5 premium.

Savannah, 2 premium.

Augusta, 2 premium.

Alabama, 10 discount.

Tennessee, 10 discount.

Specie, 6 a 6½ premium.

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